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**Over 100 Social Scientists Across the Country File Amicus Brief Urging U.S. Supreme Court to Find Mississippi's 15-Week Abortion Ban Unconstitutional**

*Brief Shows the Long-term Physical, Mental and Economic Harm of Abortion Denial on Women and Their Families*

**Oakland, Calif.**—More than 100 social science experts filed an [amicus brief](#) led by experts at the University of California, San Francisco and the University of Texas urging the Supreme Court of the United States to reject Mississippi's ban on abortions past 15 weeks. The law will be reviewed in the Supreme Court case *Dobbs v Jackson Women's Health*, which will be heard on December 1, 2021. The brief explains what is known about why women seek abortions past 15 weeks, which is when the Mississippi law would ban them, how upholding this law would deny access to abortion care in almost half the United States, and the long-term harm women experience when they are denied an abortion.

The researchers who led the brief are based at Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health (ANSIRH) at the University of California, San Francisco; and the Texas Policy Evaluation Project (TxPEP) at The University of Texas at Austin. The brief describes the extensive research on the safety of abortion, the harms of denying someone a wanted abortion, and the severe reduction in care if the Mississippi abortion law were allowed to stand. The brief has been signed by more than 100 social scientists based at research universities and institutions throughout the U.S.

Indicators of reproductive, maternal and child health in Mississippi are among the worst in the country. Even before this abortion ban, nearly 9 in 10 (87%) Mississippi patients who were seeking an abortion experienced hardships, such as missing work, delaying expenses or selling something of value, traveling more than 50 miles, arranging child care, and needing to stay overnight. The brief shows that this abortion ban would create additional logistical and other hurdles for women seeking abortion care, such as out-of-state travel, higher costs, and other restrictions like multiple visits. Banning abortions at 15 weeks, which is before many women realize they are pregnant and can receive abortion care, may force many to forego an abortion altogether. The brief further argues that forcing women to carry an unwanted pregnancy to term increases the risk of complications, injury and death, since women are fourteen times more likely to die from giving birth than they are from an abortion. This risk is even higher in Mississippi, where pregnancy-related deaths are almost twice the national average, and pregnancy-related deaths are nearly three times higher among Black people than white people.

If the ban is upheld, abortion care would be restricted for almost half of the United States, as 22 states, home to 41% of women of childbearing age, are poised to ban abortion if *Roe v Wade* is overturned, in whole or in part.

“The Mississippi ban will increase the considerable barriers to obtaining an abortion and ultimately put abortion out of reach for millions across the country. We urge the Supreme Court to reject this law. Our research shows that when people are denied a wanted abortion, they and their families suffer worse physical, mental, and economic outcomes,” says Dr. Diana Greene Foster, Director of Research at [Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health \(ANSIRH\)](#) at UCSF.

“Texans have already seen how devastating these laws can be on people’s lives and access to care – first in March 2020 when the state ordered a near total ban on abortion in the early days of the coronavirus pandemic and again in September 2021 when a 6-week ban went into effect,” said Dr. Kari White, principal investigator of the [Texas Policy Evaluation Project \(TxPEP\)](#) and Associate Professor of Sociology and Social Work at The University of Texas at Austin. “The Supreme Court should consider the quality and volume of research evidence about the harms of denying people real access to abortion and reject Mississippi’s ban.”

The ruling in this case could determine what access, if any, people would have to abortion care not only in Mississippi, but also across the country. The Supreme Court is expected to rule on *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health* next year.

To read the full brief, [click here](#). To interview the social scientists, or learn more about ANSIRH and TxPEP, please contact Chrissy Faessen at [chrissy@conwaystrategic.com](mailto:chrissy@conwaystrategic.com), 703-828-7769; Laura Kurtzman at [laura.kurtzman@ucsf.edu](mailto:laura.kurtzman@ucsf.edu), 415-502-6397; or Laura Dixon at [ldixon@prc.utexas.edu](mailto:ldixon@prc.utexas.edu), 512-788-2653.

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*Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health ([ANSIRH](#)), based at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), conducts rigorous scientific research on complex issues related to reproductive health in the United States and internationally and provides much needed evidence for active policy debates and legal battles around reproductive health issues.*

*The Texas Policy Evaluation Project (TxPEP) is a collaborative group of investigators based at The University of Texas at Austin Population Research Center conducting methodologically principled research to evaluate the impact of reproductive health policies and programs in the state of Texas.*